

# System Configuration Team Meeting Notes

July 20, 2006

## ***1. Greetings and Introductions.***

Today's System Configuration Team meeting was chaired by Bill Hevlin. The following is a summary (not a verbatim transcript) of the topics discussed and decisions made at this meeting. Anyone with questions or comments about these notes should contact Kathy Ceballos at 503-230-5420.

## ***2. FY'07 CRFM Prioritization (Continued).***

John Kranda distributed the score sheets for the 2006 CRFM prioritization process, showing the scores assigned to each line-item by the various SCT state/tribal and federal agency caucuses. The group devoted the majority of today's meeting to an item-by-item review of the scoring results.

One of the main comments from the state/tribal groups had to do with the need for follow-up work – the high cost of the preparation of final reports – for some of the research we've already done, said Jim Ruff. It's not unprecedented to have follow-up costs, particularly when we use contractors, Kranda replied. The contracts let in 2006 included data and word processing, at least for research not being done by NOAA or USGS. In some cases, those contracts expire in September, so we need to issue contracts in October to allow the contractor to complete processing the data and write and present their reports, Kranda said. Where research is ongoing, you might see a big number that includes some funds from FY'06 – there may be a reserve of funds to complete the prior year's work. We can make that a separate column, if that's the case, Kranda said.

Other areas of significant discussion included:

- Line-item 8: Washington recommended "do not fund" at this time.
- The Ice Harbor safety boom, and the need – or lack thereof – for further balloon-tag studies at Ice Harbor: some participants felt no further studies are needed until a known problem is identified. It was agreed to separate out the safety boom (which was scored high) from the balloon-tag study, which received a lower score.
- Ice Harbor Configuration and Operations Plan (COP) – the state/tribal comments

said it is important that this be done, but not funded through CRFM. There isn't much more that can be done configurationally at Ice Harbor; the only real option is a BGS or increasing spill. \$100,000 seems to high for this evaluation. Reply from Kranda: this cost is much lower than the cost of the COPs at Bonneville, The Dalles, John Day etc.

- John Day COP – Kranda noted that this should more properly be called a feasibility study for surface bypass. After a few minutes of discussion, Oregon, CRITFC, Idaho and the Council agreed to change their ranking for this item to a 4, with the recommendation that the Corps change the name of this study.
- Little Goose biological studies – this line-item needs to be scrubbed.
- Lower Granite biological testing – ballon tag studies are not necessary and are not included in the high scores this received.
- Lower Granite BGS removal needs to be done.
- Lower Granite COP: three “do not fund” comments were received, because, again, there isn't a lot more that can be done, configurationally, at this project. Kranda suggested that the SCT consider this item in the same light as the Bonneville Decision document; you will recall that, at the time that report was prepared, there had already been a significant amount of configuration work done at Bonneville. Hevlin noted that one difference is that there was a significant amount of regional participation in the development of the various decision documents, an innovation that, to date, has been lacking in the COP development process. Randy Chong noted that this is one of the processes the Corps is obligated to go through to justify and document its construction decisions. Oregon ultimately changed its score to 3; CRITFC said 1, as did Washington; Idaho's score was unchanged. The composite score was changed to 2.2.
- Lower Monumental survival efficiency study: this is a carryover to finish this work. Comments: \$400,000 seems high. Idaho scored this study a 5; Washington a 4, as did CRITFC; Oregon gave it a 5, to yield a composite score of 4.4.
- McNary survival efficiency study: Idaho gave this study a 5, Washington 4, NOAA, USFWS, BPA and the Corps a 5.
- McNary COP: comments included the fact that the cost of this study is too high, and it may be premature. The Corps agreed to work to refine the cost estimate for this study. Washington scored this study a 1, changing its composite score to 3.6.
- The Dalles juvenile passage, including the fish distribution study and the survival study: general agreement that the fish distribution study is important, while the scoring for the survival study was lower (overall rating 1)
- The Dalles boom: it's premature to fund this – more study needed.
- System spillway/intake PIT detection – it was agreed to delete “PIT” from the name of this line-item, because it may be another form of tag that ultimately yields this data; Idaho disagreed.
- System delayed mortality: not scored; SRWG needs to clarify what would actually be funded. Possible overlap with other studies.
- The Dalles spillway erosion study: BPA commented that this should be classified

an O&M, rather than a CRFM, funding item. The Corps countered that, because the damage was mainly caused by spill for fish, repair of the damage should be funded through CRFM (composite score: 3.8)

- Estuary studies: Idaho has a hard time understanding how this work will lead to management changes; at this time, they scored this a 1, as does CRITFC.

That gives us a total dollar value for all of this work is \$83.5 million, Ruff said. Kranda noted that it is unlikely that Congress will provide that much funding for FY'07. He said that, prior to the August SCT meeting, he will produce a new version of the FY'07 CRFM spreadsheet, reflecting the priorities and comments produced at today's meeting.

Lorz said he has heard that Congress may try to insert language in the FY'07 appropriations bill requiring a separate review process for any Corps project over \$40 million; Kranda said he has not heard about this. He noted, however, that the House recommended that CRFM funding be transferred to the Corps' O&M budget; however, the Senate left it in the Construction General budget, which is positive. If CRFM was transferred to O&M, it would become the Corps' job to rank fish improvement projects against O&M projects nationally, which would not be a positive development, Ruff noted.

Hevlin asked the other SCT members to consider what projects are not currently on the CRFM spreadsheet, but should be considered. Sturgeon studies was one possibility mentioned, although Ruff noted that there are a number of sturgeon studies that are already being considered for BPA funding.

### ***3. FFDRWG and SRWG Updates.***

No FFDRWG or SRWG updates were presented at today's meeting; Hevlin noted that the next Portland District FFDRWG meeting is scheduled for next week.

### ***4. Next SCT Meeting Date.***

The next System Configuration Team meeting was set for Thursday, August 17. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.